

ACADEMIC VOCABULARY

summarize: to briefly retell the main ideas in a piece of writing in your own words. A summary is always shorter and simpler than the original passage.

HERE'S HOW

Step 1: Preview the text.

- Read the title and any subheadings.
- Skim the visuals and captions.
- Read the first and last sentence in each paragraph.
- Look for repeated word that serve as clues to the subject or topic.

Step 2: Read the text.

- Pause after each paragraph or section to restate the main ideas in your own words.
- Take notes, or mark up text while you read.

Step 3: Reread your notes. Find the big ideas. Circle important information. Ignore or cross out minor details. For example, in an article on pet care for dogs, the main ideas covered might be feeding, grooming, walking, and discipline.

Step 4: Write your summary. Use the main ideas you circled. Write a coherent statement or paragraph to present the ideas in your own words. Check your summary, and revise as needed. Use the following checklist:

- Have I included the **title**, **author** and **topic** in the first sentence?
- Did I include all the **main ideas**?
- Did I use my **own words** to tell the author's ideas?
- Did I present the author's ideas in the **correct order**?
- Did I show time-order with **transitions** such as *first*, *then*, and *finally* ?
- Did I use phrases such as "according to" to **credit someone else's ideas**?
- Did I accurately show the original **author's opinions**, if any?
- Is my **summary shorter** than the original article?
- Is my **summary simple**, clear, and easy to read?
- Can someone who has not read the article **understand** my summary?